facilities like health check-ups, immunization, supplementary nutrition, pre-school learning, basic education, non-formal education, adult education, income generation activities, link drains, pavements, Community Centres etc., were generally extended by North Eastern States except Nagaland.

(c) The Prmie Minister's Poverty Eradication Programme (PMIUPEP) launched in November, 1995 has also been subsumed in the new unified Programme (SJSSRY) w.e.f. 1.12.1997 as afore-mentioned. PMI UPEP was generally applicable to the urban agglomerations with a population between 50,000 and one lakh as per the 1991 Census. Under this criteria, only 4 towns of Assam namely Nagaon, Tinsukhia, Dhubri and Tezpur and two towns of Nagaland namely Dimapur and Kohima in the North Eastern States were covered. However, keeping in view the peculiar problems of the backward and hilly States, the Programme had been extended to all the District towns of the North Eastern States provided the urban population in the district town did not exceed one lakh.

Programme for welfare of minorities

*369. DR. JAGANNATH MISHRA: Will the Minister of SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT be pleased to state:

(a) the name of the States lagging behind in implementing the 15-point programme for minorities welfare; and

(b) the steps taken/proposed to be taken by the Central Government for effective implementation of the said programme in the country?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT (SHRIMATI MANEKA GANDHI): (a) The States of Andhra Pradesh, Arunachal Pradesh, Bihar, Gujarat, Jammu & Kashmir, M,.P., Manipur, Meghalaya, Nagaland, Tripura, Uttar Pradesh, West Bengal and Delhi have not sent six-monthly progress report on the implementation since 31st March, 1997, therefore, it can be presumed that these State Governments are lagging behind in implementing the said programme.

(b) The Central Government has taken the following steps for effective implementation of the said programme in the country:

(i) Six monthly reports from State Governments/Union Territory Administrations on implementation of the programme are closely monitored.

(ii) Guidelines were issued by the Department of Personnel and Training for nominating a member belonging to minority community on the Selection Board/Committees set up for recruitment of 10 crore more vacancies in Groups 'C' and 'D' services of Central Ministries/ Departments.

(iii) Under the Pre-Examination Coaching Scheme being implemented since 1992-93, candidates belonging to backward sections among minorities are being trained.

(iv) National Minorities Development and Finance Corporation (NMDFC) set up in September 1994 is providing concessional financial assistance for setting up self-employment ventures.

(v) Multi-Sectoral Development Plans are being prepared in 41 minority concentration districts.

(vi) For promotion of education among minorities, grant-in-aid is given by Maulana Azad Education Foundation to NGOs. Department of Education is also implementing schemes of Area Intensive Programme and Modernisation of Madrasa Education. Ministry of

Labour is implementing a scheme for providing employment-oriented technical education to minorities.

(vii) States/UITs have been asked to issue orders to enable District Collectors to disburse ex-gratia relief to the victims of the communal violence expeditiously.

(viii) Powers have been given to Chief Executive Officers of State Wakf Boards under Sections 54 and 55 of the Wakf Act 1995 to remove encroachments from Wakf properties (including graveyards) and seek assistance of Sub-Divisional Magistrate of the area, if necessary.

Theft of Cast Iron Pipes

*370. SHRIMATI KAMLA SINHA: Will the Minister of URBAN AFFAIRS AND EMPLOYMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that a large number of cast iron pipes have been mischievously stolen from the DDA's Central Store at Azadpur;

(b) if so, what are the details thereof;

(c) whether any connivance with the DDA staff in the theft of the pipes is suspected;

(d) if so, whether the racket involved in the theft of the pipes has been identified; and

(e) the action taken by Government in the matter?

THE MINISTER OF URBAN AFFAIRS AND EMPLOYMENT (SHRI RAM JETHMALANI): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. On 8th May, 1998, a theft of 49 numbers of 150 mm dia. of Pipes each 5.5 mtr. long, was detected. FIR was lodged with the Jahangirpuri Police Station on the same day.

(c) to (e) The Police is investigating the matter. Departmental enquiry has also been ordered by Vice Chairman, DDA. Action against the DDA staff, if found involved, will be taken after the investigation/enquiry is completed.

Modernisation of Durgapur and Rourkela Steel Plants

*371. SHRI C.O. POULOSE:
SHRI JIBON ROY:

Will the Minister of STEEL AND MINES be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have received reports of irregularities in the modernisation of Durgapur and Rourkela Steel Plants;

(b) if so, whether Government have made enquiries in the matter; and

(c) the findings of the enquiry and the steps taken by Government on these findings?

THE MINISTER OF STEEL AND MINES (SHRI NAVEEN PATNAIK): (a) and (b) Complaints/references received in the Ministry alleging irregularities in respect of modernisation projects at Durgapur Steel Plant and Rourkela Steel Plant of SAIL are duly examined in consultation with concerned authorities. As on date, no formal enquiry has been ordered by Ministry of Steel in this regard.

(c) Does not arise in view of (a) & (b) above.

Setting up of NIOH in state capitals

*372. SHRI YERRA NARAYANASWAMY: Will the Minister of SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is any move to increase the number of National Institutes for the Orthopaedically Handicapped (NIOH) all over the country;

(b) if so, details thereof;

(c) whether it is a fact that no State capitals have any such institutes on the